PARAMARTHASARAH

by

Abhinavagupta

translated by

Arabinda Basu

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INVOCATION

He who in spite of being consciousness-massed is congealed in the form of the world exists/remains as the unborn, supreme Lord skillful in the sport of veiling his own Self. [1]

This (is) a summary of Paramarthasara, which was composed by the teacher; in this work I, Yoga, as desired by the learned, am (making)/giving a brief description of it. [2]

GLOSSARY

cidghana = cit + ghana = consciousness-massed

svatma = own self

pracchadana = cover

krda = game, sport

vidagdha = skillful

Parameshvara = parama + ishvara = Supreme Lord

Paramarthasara = parama + artha = Supreme Good

sara = essence

samksepah = summary

Yogah = name of the author of the commentary

Paramathasara, by Abhinavagupta

Param parastham gahanat anadim
ekam nivishtam vahudha guhasu
sarvalayam sarvacaracarstham
tvameva shambhum sharanam prapadye. [1]

I take refuge in you, Sambhu, the supreme, primeval/beginningless One, existent beyond the depth, abyss, manifoldly existent in the caves, the home of all and present in all moving and unmoving (things).

GLOSSARY

param = supreme

parastham gahanat = literally, existent beyond depth; beyond the categories of Maya

anadi = na + adi = no beginning; he who has no beginning

ekam = one

vahudha = varied

guham = literally, in the caves, in the heart of limited knowers

sarvalayam-sarva(sya) + alayam = all-abode, home of all

alayam = place of rest

'Paramathasara, by Abhinavagupta

Garbhadhivasapurvaka
maranantakaduhkhacakravibhrantah
adharam bhagavantam
shishyah papraccha paramartham [2]

Bewildered by the circle/cycle of miseries starting with staying in the womb and ending with death, the disciple asked the Master/Lord Adhara about the supreme Reality and the Good.

Adharakarikabhih

tam gururabhibhashate sma tatsaram

kathayatyabhinavaguptah

shivashasanadrshtiyogena [3]

The Teacher told him/instructed him in the essence of that by means of the Adhara Karikas. Abhinavagupta is teaching/telling [the same] in accordance with the vision of the Shaiva philosophy.

GLOSSARY

Adhara = name of a sage, author of Adharakarika

shivashasanadrshtiyogena

Shiva = reality

shasana = literally, regulation; scripture

drshti - vision, point of view

yoga = connection, union

Nijashaktivaibhavabharad
andacatushtayamidam vibhagena
shaktirmaya-prakrtih
prthvi ceti prabhavitam prabhuna [4]

From the fullness of the wealth/treasure of his own Force, by means of division these four eggs, Shakti, Maya, Prakriti and Prithvi, are manifested by the Lord.

GLOSSARY

andacatustaya = eggs, four

shakti, maya, prakrti, prthvi = names of the four eggs (in the order of descent)

prabhavitam = manifested, made, created

Tatrantarvishvamidam

vicitratanu-karana-bhuvansantanam

bhokta ca tatra dehi

shiva eva grhitapashubhavah [5]

This universe within that (is) the extension of varied bodies, instruments and worlds. There the enjoyer is the embodied (creature) -- indeed Shiva who has assumed the nature/disposition of the animal (atomic soul).

GLOSSARY

vishvam = universe

tanu = body

karana = instruments

bhuvana = world

santana = expansion, extension

bhokta = enjoyer

dehi = embodied

grhita-pashu-bhava = taken animal disposition (adjective for Shiva who has assumed the state of limited knower)

Nanavidhavarnanam
rupam dhatte yatha' malah sphatikah
suramanushapashupadapa-
rupatvam tadvadisho' pi [6]

Just as the stainless crystal bears/assumes many/multi-colored form, so also the Lord (takes) the form of god, man, animal, tree.

GLOSSARY

nanavidha = varied

amala, a + malah = no stain, stainless

sphatikah = crystal

sura = god

manusha = man

pashu = animal

padapa = tree

ishoh = of the Lord

Gacchati gacchati jala iva
himakarabimbam sthite sthitim yati
tanu-karana-bhuvanavarge
tatha' yamatma maheshanah [7]

Just as the image of the moon moves in moving water and is stationary in stationary water, so (is) this Self, the great Lord in bodies, instruments and worlds.

GLOSSARY

himakara = cold-maker, moon

bimba = reflection

maheshana = maha + ishana = Great Lord

Rahuradrshyo' pi yatha
shashibimbasthah prakashate tadvat
sarvagato' pyayamatma
vishayashrayanena dhimukure [8]

Just as Rahu, though invisible, manifests/is seen as an image in the moon, similarly, this Self, present/existent in everything shines in the mirror of understanding by taking resort to objects.

GLOSSARY

Rahu = legendary demon whose head was cut off, which still goes around in the sky though invisible, and is manifest only whe nit is reflected on the moon at the time of eclipse

sarva-gatah
sarva = all
gatah = literally, gone; pervasive

dhimukure
dhi = intelligence
mukura = mirror

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9. adarshe malarahite
yadvad vadanam vibhati tadvad ayam
shiva-shaktipatavimale
dhitattve bhati bharupah [9]

As a face shines in a stainless mirror, likewise this (Self) shines as illumination in the understanding (made) pure by the descent of the shakti/force of Shiva.

GLOSSARY

adarsha = looking glass

mala = dirt, impurity

rahita = devoid of

vadana = face

shaktipata = descent of shakti
    shakti = force
    pata = falling

dhitattva = understanding category

bhati = shines

bharupah = of the nature of bha, i.e. light, consciousness

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10-11. bharupam paripurnam
svatmani vishrantito mahanandam
icchasamvitkaranair
nirbharitam anantashaktiparipurnam [10]
sarvavikalpavihinam
shuddham shantam layodayavihinam
yat parattattvam tasmin
vibhati shattrimshadatma jagat [11]

The world of thirty-six categories shines in that which is the supreme Reality, of the nature of Illumination. Full/complete, great Bliss resting in its own self, full of will, knowledge and action and of infinite powers, devoid of all alternatives (intellectual constructs), pure, pacific and without dissolution and emergence/creation.

GLOSSARY

paripurna = completely full

visrantita = rested

mahananda = maha + ananda = great bliss

iccha = will

samvit = knowledge

karana = instruments

nirbharitam = full

ananta = limitless, infinite

vikalpa = thought constructs, alternatives

Paramathasara, by Abhinavagupta

shuddha = pure

shanta = quiescent, peaceful

laya = dissolution

udaya = rising up, emergence

vihina = without

para = supreme

tattva = category reality

vibhati = shines

shat =six

trimshat = thirty

atma = (here) of the nature of

jagat = world, universe

Paramathasara, by Abhinavagupta

12-13. darpanabimbe yadvan
nagaragramadi citramavibhagi
bhati vibhagenaiva ca
parasparam darpanadapi ca [12]
vimalatamaparamabhairava-
bodhat tadvad vibhagashunyamapi
anyonyam ca tato'pi ca
vibhaktamabhati jagadetat [13]

Just as the variety of city, villages, etc., though not different, shines in the reflection in the mirror as separate from each other and also from the mirror, so also this world, though devoid of differences from the consciousness of the Supreme Bhairava who is the purest, manifests as separate from that and (things in it) from each other.

GLOSSARY

darpana = mirror

bimba = reflection
bimbe (locative case) = in the reflection

nagara = city

grama = village

citram = varied

avibhaga = no difference, no division
abivaghi = that which has no difference

parasparam = mutually

vimala = stainless, pure

bhairava = Shiva

Paramathasara, by Abhinavagupta

vaibhava = wealth

bodha = knowledge, consciousness
    bodhat = (ablative) from knowledge

vibhaga = separation

shunya = zero, without

anyonyam = from each other

14. Shiva-shakti-sadashivata-
mishvara-vidyamayim ca tattvadasham
shaktinam pancanam
vibhaktabhavena bhasayati [14]

[Paramashiva] manifests, in accordance with the difference of the five Shaktis, the categories of Shiva, Shakti, Sadashiva, Ishvara and [Suddha] Vidya.

GLOSSARY

shiva to vidya = names of five categories in the pure hemisphere in which there is no sense of duality

dasha = condition, state

panca = five
pancanam = of five

vibhakta = separated

bhavena = as, in the manner of

15. paramam yat svatantryam
durghatasampadanam maheshasya
devi mayashaktih
svatmavaranam shivasyaitat [15]

That which is the supreme Freedom, capable of accomplishing the very difficult, is the Goddess Maya-Power; the self-veiling of Shiva (is) this.

GLOSSARY

svatantrya = freedom, from svatantra, free

durghata = difficult to happen

sampadana = accomplishing

mahesha = great

isha = Lord
ishasya = (genitive) of the Lord

devi = shining Goddess

maya shakti = maya power, that gives rise to sense or duality

svatma = own self

avarana = veil

16. mayaparigrahavashad
bodho malinah puman pashurbhavati
kala-kala-niyativashad
ragavidyavashena sambaddhah [16]

Owing to assuming Maya, Consciousness, [now] impure/obscure, becomes Purusha, animal, and bound by Kala, Kala, Niyati, Raga and Avidya.

GLOSSARY

parigraha = taking, assuming

vasha = control

vashat = (ablative) because of control

malinah = obscure, impure

puman = person, soul

pashu = animal

kala = time

kala = power,

niyati = control, power that control

raga = interest, attachment

vidya = knowledge, here limited knowledge